

/275 cont./

(of which von den Steinen's study, more than 50 years old, still offers an extraordinarily faithful description) if one did not take into account the fact that this culture, in itself highly superior to that of the Brazilian caboclo /"copper-colored"/ has been raised still more above the latter level by the gifts of the Service de Protection. A fisherman on the Rio Vermelho, in 1936, had only one means of obtaining an axe for himself: it was to try to get one from the Indians. The essential reason which permitted us to make up a small group to make the trip to Kejara, in a period when navigation in a canoe is particularly difficult, is that our men knew that the Indians in this village—where they had never been—had cultivated tobacco, and they were hoping to bring back some young plants. Their hope was realized: the 300 tobacco plants given by the natives to our canoeiros marked the beginning of tobacco cultivation by the Brazilian population of the upper São Lourenço. These extraordinary conditions explain why the material culture of the Bororo, incomparably superior to that of the immediate environment, should have been almost exactly preserved.

economic life. The present-day diet /276/ of the Bororo is more vegetable than meat. This is explained by the growing necessity to have recourse to agriculture in view of the increasing scarcity